

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 6, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 29

Introduced by Assembly Member Allen
(Principal coauthor: Senator Leno)

February 24, 2012

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 29—Relative to honeybees.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 29, as amended, Allen. Pollinators.

This measure would urge *the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation to act expeditiously to protect pollinators, especially honeybees, by prohibiting the use, marketing, or sale of neonicotinoid products deemed hazardous to pollinators* *officially recognize the importance of pollinators to our food supply and environment, to declare the urgency of Colony Collapse Disorder, and to promote healthy environments for all pollinators.*

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Agriculture is a major industry in California, with
- 2 a direct connection to 1 in every 10 jobs; and
- 3 WHEREAS, Since the early 20th Century, migratory beekeepers
- 4 have provided a critical service to the United States and California
- 5 economies, pollinating a wide variety of high value crops, including
- 6 almonds, cherries, and apples; and

1 ~~WHEREAS, Honeybees are the most economically valuable~~
2 ~~pollinator in the United States, adding well over \$15 billion in~~
3 ~~economic value to agriculture each year; and~~

4 ~~WHEREAS, One in three bites of food we eat is dependent on~~
5 ~~honeybees for pollination; and~~

6 ~~WHEREAS, California is responsible for more than half the~~
7 ~~world's almond production, and approximately 1.3 to 1.5 million~~
8 ~~honeybee colonies are rented for almond pollination alone; and~~

9 ~~WHEREAS, Bees and other pollinators are essential to the~~
10 ~~majority of the flowering plants on our planet and to the production~~
11 ~~of more than 130 different food crops; and~~

12 ~~WHEREAS, Some farmers and growers depend on pollinators~~
13 ~~for seed production for crops grown in subsequent years; and~~

14 ~~WHEREAS, Honeybees are the main pollinators on which we~~
15 ~~depend, but native pollinators, such as other species of bees, are~~
16 ~~also essential; and~~

17 ~~WHEREAS, Almonds, apples, apricots, avocados, blueberries,~~
18 ~~carrots, cantaloupes, cherries, cucumbers, cranberries, kiwis,~~
19 ~~melons, onions, pears, plums, prunes, and more, depend on~~
20 ~~honeybee pollination; and~~

21 ~~WHEREAS, Poor pollination leads to poor fruit development;~~
22 ~~and~~

23 ~~WHEREAS, Pollinators are responsible for one out of every~~
24 ~~three bites of food that we eat; and~~

25 ~~WHEREAS, In 2006, honeybees in the United States began~~
26 ~~disappearing in large numbers;—a term coined phenomenon called~~
27 ~~“colony collapse disorder”; and~~

28 ~~WHEREAS, Multiple, interacting causes are likely contributors~~
29 ~~to “colony collapse disorder,” including pathogens, habitat loss,~~
30 ~~and pesticides; and~~

31 ~~WHEREAS, Immune system damage is a critical factor that may~~
32 ~~be at the root of the disorder; and~~

33 ~~WHEREAS, Each year since 2006, commercial beekeepers have~~
34 ~~reported annual losses of 26-36 percent, more than double what~~
35 ~~is bees in excess of what would be considered normal; and~~

36 ~~WHEREAS, Honeybees are a keystone indicator species and~~
37 ~~their decline points to broader environmental degradation.~~
38 ~~degradation; and~~

39 ~~WHEREAS, Pollinator population declines—are thus—a~~
40 ~~disproportionately important may be a disproportionately~~

1 *significant* piece of the current collapse in biodiversity that ~~7 in~~
2 ~~10 some~~ biologists believe poses an even greater threat to humanity
3 than ~~the global warming~~ *climate change*, which contributes to it;
4 ~~and now, therefore, be it~~

5 WHEREAS, The United States Environmental Protection Agency
6 (EPA) ~~has identified a newer class of systemic, neurotoxic~~
7 pesticides called neonicotinoids, and especially the products
8 containing imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxin, as being highly
9 toxic to honeybees; and

10 WHEREAS, Bayer CropScience recently announced the removal
11 of almonds from the pesticide label for imidacloprid products in
12 California, thereby eliminating the use of the product in almond
13 orchards, in response to concerns by the scientific community
14 about the product's impacts on honeybees; and

15 WHEREAS, Both the EPA and the California Department of
16 Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) are tasked with evaluating the threat
17 of pesticides to pollinators before they are marketed in California.
18 However, these agencies have relied on industry studies and failed
19 to adequately study problems with pesticides as they arise in the
20 field; and

21 WHEREAS, Governments in Italy, Germany, France, and
22 elsewhere have already taken action to protect pollinators from
23 neonicotinoids, and the State of New York has already banned
24 neonicotinoid products; now, therefore, be it

25 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
26 *California, jointly, That the Legislature urges the EPA and the*
27 *CDPR to act expeditiously to protect pollinators, and especially*
28 *honeybees, by prohibiting the use, marketing, or sale of*
29 *neonicotinoid products deemed hazardous to pollinators* *United*
30 *States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the United States*
31 *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California*
32 *Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the California*
33 *Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR), to officially recognize*
34 *the critical importance of pollinators to our food supply and to*
35 *our environment; and be it further*

36 *Resolved, That the Legislature urges the EPA and the, the USDA,*
37 *the CDFA, and the CDPR to create a clear timeline and plan of*
38 *action for addressing pesticides that pose harm to pollinators,*
39 *especially neonicotinoids declare the urgency of Colony Collapse*

1 *Disorder, as well as for further identifying the reasons underlying*
2 *Colony Collapse Disorder; and be it further*
3 *Resolved, That the Legislature urges the EPA, the USDA, the*
4 *CDFA, and the CDPR, and the California Department of Food and*
5 *Agriculture, to promote healthy environments for all pollinators*
6 *through existing programs and new funding opportunities; and be*
7 *it further*
8 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*
9 *of this resolution to the office of the Governor, the Secretary of*
10 *the Senate, and the author for appropriate distribution.*

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